

REMARKS

In the patent application, claims 1-46 are pending. By this Response, Applicant has amended claims 1, 8, 11, 17, 25 and 30, and has canceled claims 10, 24 and 31. Accordingly, claims 1-9, 11-23, 25-30 and 32-46 are at issue.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3, 6, 16, 19, 23, 33, 36 and 46 have been allowed.

The Examiner has further indicated that claims 8, 10-15, 24-28, 31, 38, and 40-45 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 8 has been amended to be in independent form including all of the limitations of claim 1.

Objected-to claim 10 depends on claim 1. By this Response, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 10, and has canceled claim 10. Further, Applicant has amended claim 11 to depend from claim 1 instead of claim 10. Accordingly, Applicant submits claim 1 is in condition for allowance, and claims 2, 4-5, 7 and 9, and 11-15 which depend from claim 1, either directly or indirectly, and which include each of the limitations of claim 1, are also in condition for allowance.

Objected-to claim 24 depends on claim 17. By this Response, Applicant has amended claim 17 to include the limitations of claim 24, and has canceled claim 24. Further, Applicant has amended claim 25 to depend on claim 17 instead of claim 24. Accordingly, Applicant submits claim 17 is in condition for allowance, and claims 18, 20-22, and 25-28 which depend from claim 17, either directly or indirectly, and which contain each of the limitations of claim 17, are also in condition for allowance.

Objected-to claim 31 depends from claim 30. By this Response, Applicant has amended claim 30 to include the limitations of claim 31, and has canceled claim 31. Accordingly, Applicant submits claim 30 is in condition for allowance, and claims 32, 34-35, and 37-45 which depend from claim 30, either directly or indirectly, and which contain each of the limitations of claim 30, are also in condition for allowance.

Applicant has cancelled and/or amended all of the rejected claims to include the limitations of an objected-to but otherwise allowable dependent claim. Accordingly, all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Notwithstanding this Amendment, Applicant reserves the right to present the rejected claims (prior to any amendments made herein) in a continuation application for further consideration and does not agree with the rejection maintained in the present Office Action.

Conclusion

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that, in light of the above amendments and Remarks, claims 1-9, 11-23, 25-30 and 32-46 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to allow the claims to issue.

Please charge Deposit Account 19-3875 (SAA-34-1) for any additional fees necessary at this time or credit it for any overpayments.

Signed at Palatine, Cook County, Illinois this 1st day of September, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP AF, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on September 1, 2004.

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